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# Mural Decoration

## THE DECORATION OF ODD SHAPED CEILINGS.—I.

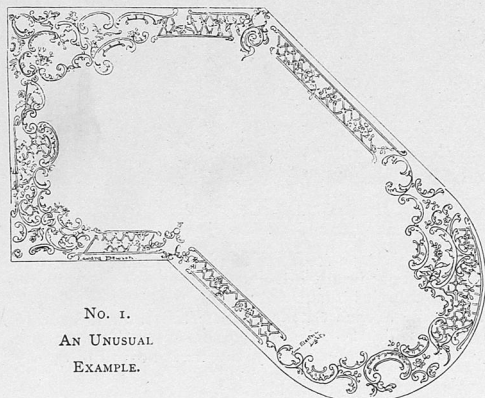
BY "ZEPHO."



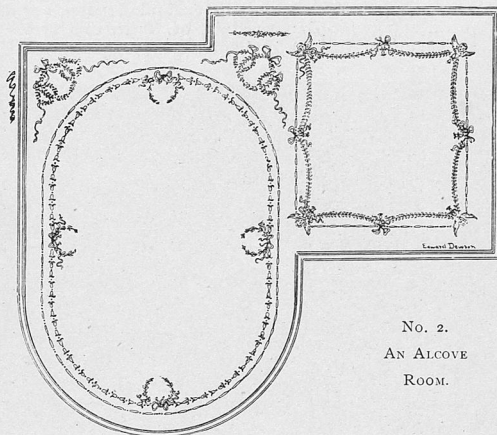
NOTABLE feature in the modern house is the peculiar shape and formation of some of the principal rooms, brought about on the part of the architect by an effort at picturesque effect, combined with a praiseworthy endeavor to utilize space to the best advantage, and, while the results are often satisfactory as far as the lower portions are concerned, the floors and walls, which are so broken up by furniture, draperies and window and door openings as to detract the eye from this peculiarity; still, the ceiling remains, presenting to the eye a plain, unbroken field that gives the decorator and householder a difficult and intricate problem to solve in arranging the decorative features with satisfying and artistic results.

No general rules can be laid down for the arrangement of designs on such ceilings, as each brings about its own special requirements; but it is usually desirable to follow either some geometrical formations within the allotted space—or, when the shape is too erratic, to follow the outlines of the wall lines with the ornamental work. In this one must be governed wholly by conditions and circumstances.

The examples shown in these articles are practical problems I have had occasion to solve, and satisfactory results were brought about only by careful study.



No. 1.  
AN UNUSUAL  
EXAMPLE.



No. 2.  
AN ALCOVE  
ROOM.

No. 1 shows a most unusual example, and a difficult problem as well; the free rendering of the Rococo seemed the only possible way of solving it, and the effort was to bring the greater masses of designs as nearly opposite to one another as the formation of the ceiling would allow, and so arranging it in connection with the wall treatment as to present to the eye an easy sense of balance and proportion. As this was a reception-room, the decorations were in soft tones of buff, the desired effect being fitly brought about by making the ornamental work in papier-mâché touched with gold. In this example it was apparent that no good results could be brought about by the use of geometrical lines as a basis for decoration; and again, the nature of the room—a reception-room made the application of such forms undesirable, so the adoption of some style that would allow of an easy and free rendering was imperative, and to this the Rococo, or Louis IV. styles lent themselves admirably.

Sketch No. 2 shows an entirely different state of affairs, both in the character of its outline, as well as its use—a family sitting-room. This was to some extent an alcove room, but with no dividing beam on the ceiling, and here I made use of the geometrical features, viz., a square, and an elliptic circle. The style adopted for ornaments was Colonial, this being well adapted both to the geometrical formation and the character of the room. The colors were soft tones of yellow, and the ornaments relief work—although the same idea may be carried out in colors, if desirable, of a delicate character.